

The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations
Commission on Appraisal



March Meeting, 2008
Chicago, IL

Minutes

March 27th, 2008

Preliminary discussions began at 7:55.

Present: Orlanda Brugnola, Barbara Child, Pete Fontneau, Bev Harrison, Don Mohr, Michael Ohlrogge, Tom Owen-Towle, Jacqui Williams,

Preliminary Matters

Minutes: The minutes from the January meeting were approved.

Agenda: The agenda was also approved, with a few changes in order.

UU World Update:

Barbara reported on her conversation with the UU World. She clarified several misunderstandings from the initial interview. The commission reaffirmed its openness to further interviews from various sources but stressed the importance of being able to preview any written pieces to make sure that all of the facts are accurately reported.

Technical Process Matters:

The Commission reviewed the bylaws issues involved in the process of our review. We clarified and reiterated that the UUA Board does indeed need to approve whatever changes we might suggest in order for them to go to the GA. If they don't approve, we still have the right to submit the amendments to the GA, but they would not be eligible to be voted on at that time, the most that could happen would that they would be referred to a whole new study process with a new commission appointed.

March 28th, 2008

Present: Orlanda Brugnola, Barbara Child, Megan Dowdell, Pete Fontneau, Bev Harrison, Don Mohr, Michael Ohlrogge, Tom Owen-Towle, Jacqui Williams,

Centering: The morning began with a centering worship led by Pete Fontneau

Reporting on Interviews: Commissioners reported on interviews and conversations from Alice Blair Wesley, Kendyl Gibbons, Leslie Takahashi Morris, and discussed plans for a few others. Barbara set a deadline of GA for all further such input.

Report & Discussion on Consultation on Ministry to and with Youth: Megan reported on the Consultation on Ministry to and with Youth and the findings of its process. In particular, the commission discussed the key phrase “spirit-centered” coming from the Consultation and how that affects our work. The Commission also discussed membership practices in congregations and how they relate to belonging and the Article II work. The consultation mentioned a desire to see engagement of youth with the CoA’s review process, although there were no further specifics given. The CoA discussed its continuing efforts to include voices of youth in its process.

Macro Questions

The Commission considered a new set of “macro questions” such as it has in several past meetings. First among these was whether the Commission is in agreement that some changes of some sort will be proposed. The Commission decided that it will indeed suggest some changes to Article II. The plan will be for the project manager to create an initial draft, based on all of the input, feedback, and decisions that have occurred so far. This will then be presented to the Commission for review and changes.

In light of this process, the Commission decided that many of its other “macro questions” such as how many principles to have, how big of changes to suggest, how much to emphasize structure vs. content, and so on, would be best addressed after a preliminary draft has been produced. The Commission did affirm though that there will be no creedal requirement in the suggested changes, that the historical sources of Judaism and Christianity will continue to be explicitly named, and that the focus of the document will be on congregations but with a mindfulness of a wider audience reading it.

March 29th, 2008

CoA Workshop & Plenary Presentation for GA:

The Commission worked in groups to create drafts of its workshop for General Assembly. The workshop is to be interactive, informative, and multi-generational. It will seek to build excitement and enthusiasm for the project. The Commission decided that we will indeed tell people at GA that we will be proposing changes to Article II but that we have not yet arrived at what those changes will be. The Commission will seek to remind people that although we have the ability to *recommend* changes, the only body with the power to actually *make* changes is the General Assembly.

Other Materials to Produce along with our Recommendations on Article II:

The Commission agreed that when we report to the Board in '09, it will come with at least some sort of explanation, accounting for process, etc. This will include:

1. Cover letter
2. Process used in the project
3. Stats on input
4. Rationale for changes, outline of thought pieces on the changes. (maybe a paragraph per substantive change)
5. This whole package will be between 5 and 10 pages.

The Commission will send out a packet in Spring '09 to congregations, including:

1. FAQ
2. Format to help delegates get informed
3. Workshop for congregations, districts (might be a workshop outline, might be suggestions for workshops)
4. Send out in congregational mailings, over the internet, to districts, ID groups
5. Send material to District Execs about doing workshops at District Assemblies.
6. All this stuff goes onto our website.
7. List of other ideas (such as a worship service) that congregations can do with the proposed document.

The Commission agreed that whatever report we will create will be done by GA '09.

Budget Report:

-Annual Budget: \$34,000.00

-Year to Date Expenditures: \$29,285.44

-Amount Remaining: \$4,714.56

-At the last meeting, there was a question about a certain \$5,800. That was our October Hotel bill. No charges to the printing budget of \$1,000.

Respectfully Submitted,

-Michael Ohlrogge

Secretary, Commission on Appraisal